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REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the detailed examination evidenced by the Office Action mailed September 29, 2004 (hereinafter the Office Action). Applicants further appreciate the indication that Claims 8, 9, 11, 12, and 30-33 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants have amended the claims the place the application in condition for allowance.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the recitations of Claim 8, and, accordingly, Claim 1 and dependent Claims 2-7, 9-10, and 13-19 are in condition for allowance. Claim 8 has been canceled.

Claims 11, 12 and 30-33 have been amended to independent form to place them in condition for allowance.

Claim 20 has been amended to include analogous recitations to Claim 1, and is submitted to be allowable for the same reasons as Claim 1. Claims 21-29 and 34-38 are patentable at least per the patentability of Claim 20 from which they depend.

CONCLUSION

In light of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully submit that the above-entitled application is now in condition for allowance. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: MS AMENDMENT, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on December 16, 2004.